

[Report 1939] / Medical Officer of Health and School Medical Officer of Health, Southport County Borough.

Contributors

Southport (England). County Borough Council.

Publication/Creation

1939

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COUNTY BOROUGH



OF SOUTHPORT.



REPORT

UPON THE

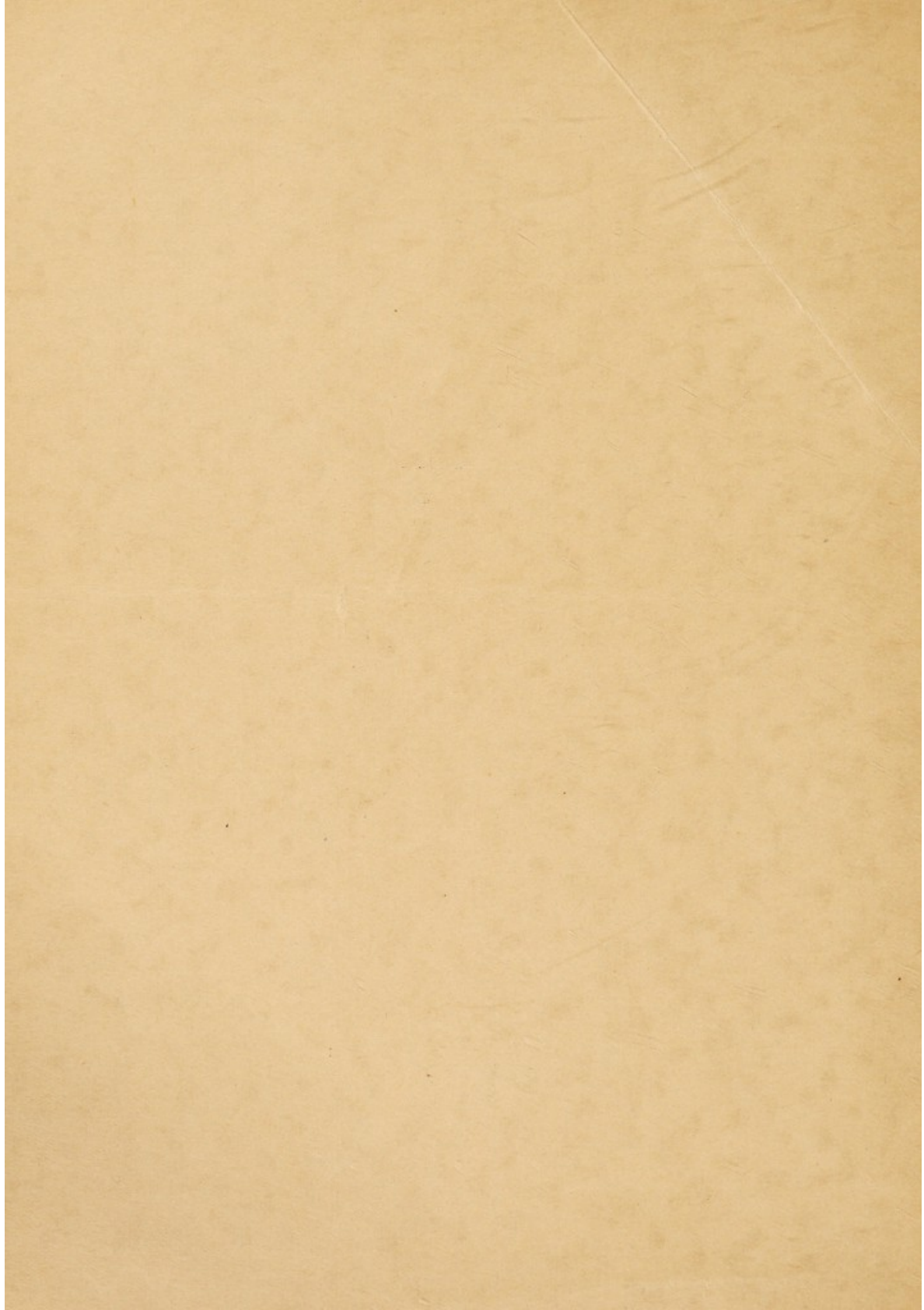
Health and Sanitary Condition

OF THE

County Borough of Southport

For the Year 1939

*(including the Thirty-first Annual Report of the
School Medical Officer).*



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COUNTY BOROUGH OF SOUTHPORT.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH AND SCHOOL
MEDICAL OFFICER FOR THE YEAR 1939.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH
COMMITTEE.

The statistics and other information usually contained in my Annual Report have been compiled as usual this year. The abridged form of report which follows is the result of a request made by the Ministry of Health that, because of the war, Annual Reports of Medical Officers of Health should be as brief as possible, and confined to exceptional, and urgent matters, which have affected the public health during the year.

Long before the war commenced the work of the Health Department had increased greatly. Two features, namely (a) the Emergency Hospital Scheme, in regard to which the Health Department is required to co-operate with the Ministry's Hospital Officer, and (b) the A.R.P. Casualty Services which is administered entirely from the Health Department, are not mentioned in the Report. A third feature, the Evacuation Scheme, demanded the availability of all existing health services for people coming to the town from other areas, and this report commences with a brief outline of the arrangements made, and the manner in which these arrangements affected the existing services.

Generally speaking, the services available for the people of the town have been maintained at their pre-war standard.

I am,

Yours faithfully,

W. E. FITZGERALD,

Medical Officer of Health and
School Medical Officer.

GOVERNMENT EVACUATION SCHEME.

Expectant mothers, children, and certain other classes of persons were received in Southport during the beginning of September, under the Government Evacuation Scheme. The Health and Medical Services of the Corporation were held available for these people as if they were residents. In certain instances additional facilities, which are detailed below, had to be provided.

Infectious Diseases.—Hospital accommodation was provided at New Hall Isolation Hospital until the number of cases demanded additional beds. To provide additional beds, the Summer School belonging to the Wigan Education Authority was taken over by arrangement, and converted into a 36-bed annexe to the New Hall Hospital. Patients were first admitted on the 17th November, 1939, and the hospital continued in use for infectious diseases up to the 28th May, 1940, when the number of cases of infectious disease in the town had reduced to such an extent that annexe accommodation became unnecessary. Since the latter date the annexe has also been used for children suffering from skin complaints.

SCHOOL MEDICAL SERVICE.

Skin Diseases.—The accommodation at the Corporation's Skin Hospital at Pilkington Road was from the beginning obviously inadequate for the number of skin conditions found in the children evacuated from other areas, and Rosefield Hall, in Hesketh Road, was taken over and equipped for the treatment of skin diseases. Children seen at the Skin Clinic, held weekly at the Health Centre, were sent to Rosefield Hall if the condition from which they were suffering made in-patient treatment desirable, taking into account the circumstances prevailing in the households where they were billeted. Rosefield Hall was open for the treatment of skin cases from the 11th September, 1939, to the 31st May, 1940, when the patients were transferred to the New Hall annexe.

Eye Clinic.—The single weekly eye clinic held at the Health Centre proved insufficient to deal with the extra numbers, and from the 26th September, 1939, to the 24th May, 1940, an additional clinic for evacuated children only was held.

Ear Clinic.—It was not necessary to hold an additional clinic for ear conditions, the regular weekly clinic being able to absorb the additional numbers.

Minor Ailments.—Special Minor Ailment Clinics had to be set up in Crossens and Ainsdale, and these continued, with an hourly session each morning on five mornings a week, from the first week in September, until the 14th December in the case of Crossens, and the 21st of that month in Ainsdale. Apart from these special sessions, all children were dealt with at the morning minor ailments clinic held at the Health Centre, 2, Church Street. On one morning in the week a special doctor's session for Bootle children is held.

Dental Work.—The Bootle Education Committee set up a special dental clinic for Bootle children at the St. John Hall. It soon became unnecessary to open this clinic oftener than a couple of sessions per week. Other evacuated children, together with Bootle children, who needed urgent attention when the St. John Hall clinic happened to be closed, have been

treated at the Southport School Dental Clinics. The routine dental inspection of Bootle children in Southport has been carried out by the Bootle Dental Staff.

Routine Medical Inspection.—A member of the Medical Staff of the Bootle Health Department, together with Health Visitors, have been doing duty in Southport and accordingly the routine inspection of Bootle children has not fallen upon the local staff.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

Infant Welfare Centres.—It was necessary to set up additional weekly sessions in all parts of the Borough during the first week in September, and these, together with the dates from which they ceased to be held, are shown below:—

Bethel Chapel, Crossens. Last date, 13th November, 1939.

Norwood Road Baptist Church. Last date, 14th December, 1939.

Hampton Road Centre. Additional session ceased 8th January, 1940.

Hoghton Street, Centre. Still continuing.

Methodist Church Schools, Ainsdale. Last date, 21st December, 1939.

Supplies of dried milk, the issue of tickets for fresh milk, and other facilities enjoyed by Southport residents were available at the sessions.

Ante-Natal and Post-Natal Clinics.—A special session for mothers from the evacuation areas has been held throughout at the Christiana Hartley Maternity Hospital. In addition, a clinic was held at the Hydropathic Hospital, which for the period mentioned below was open and used as an emergency maternity hospital.

Maternity Hospital Accommodation.—The number of beds at the Christiana Hartley Maternity Hospital was increased at the outbreak of war, but it soon became necessary to implement a scheme which had been worked out in detail prior to the war, under which the nursing homes in the town were involved. This scheme included the opening of an Emergency Maternity Hospital with 40 beds at the Hydropathic Hospital in School Street, by arrangement with the management. It was opened for the reception of patients on the 5th September, 1939, and closed on the 15th November, 1939, when the patients in at the time were transferred to the Christiana Hartley Maternity Hospital.

Health Visitors.—Notwithstanding the fact that the evacuating authorities were able to send a number of health visitors to Southport to assist in the increased work, it was necessary to employ additional help, and altogether six auxiliary health visitors were employed for varying periods. The need for auxiliary assistants ceased to exist by the 31st March, 1940, and from that date it has only been necessary for the health visitors from the evacuating authorities to visit Southport on certain days each week.

SPECIAL EXTRAORDINARY ARRANGEMENTS.

Hostels for Expectant Mothers.—It was necessary at short notice early in September to provide living accommodation for expectant mothers, and empty premises at No. 79, Albert Road, Southport, were taken over, staffed and furnished for this purpose. Later an arrangement was made with the proprietors of one of the hotels in Southport for similar provision but the numbers of mothers coming from the evacuation areas did not warrant a continuance of the arrangement, which lasted from the 25th September,

1939, to the 22nd November, 1939. No. 79, Albert Road has proved a successful experiment and continues to be popular. It forms the basis of a larger scheme for hostel provision.

Hostels for Special Children.—Householders are not expected to retain in their care children suffering from Eneuresis and similar complaints. Several such children had to be accommodated in the early days of the war in hospitals in the town, but recently the policy of providing hostels for this purpose has been adopted, and No. 2, Lathom Road has since the 25th June, 1940, been used for the care of these children. No. 52, Scarisbrick New Road has also been equipped for this purpose.

Cleansing Station.—From the 18th September, 1939, to the 5th December, 1939, No. 2, Lathom Road was used as a delousing centre. Special premises with bed accommodation had to be provided because it was necessary in the majority of instances for the children to stay overnight.

Hostels for Special Categories.

(a) Blind Persons.

The building known as Stoneycroft, No. 18, Waterloo Road, was acquired for housing blind persons from Bootle. It was used from the 2nd September, 1939, to the 8th March, 1940, when the inmates were transferred to No. 69, Albert Road, Southport.

(b) Aged Sick and Cripples.

A number of people coming under this category were received from Bootle and accommodated at the West Hill Convalescent Home by arrangement with the management. The patients were there from the 2nd September to the 27th October, when they were returned to their own homes.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Population.—The population at the census of 1931 was 78,927. The Registrar-General's estimate of the population for the middle of 1938 was 78,600.

For the year 1939 two estimates have been provided by the Registrar-General for statistical purposes (a) for birth rate 78,900 and (b) for death rate 81,840.

Births.—Altogether, 925 births were registered and of these 179 were births to mothers not usually resident in the town. The Registrar-General has provided the following figures relating to births in the County Borough of Southport:—

	Live Births.		Total.	Still-births.	
	Legitimate.	Illegitimate.		Legitimate.	Illegitimate.
Male	357	25	382	13	2
Female	343	27	370	11	—
Total	700	52	752	24	2

The birth rate is 9.53 per thousand of the population, which compares with 10.2 per thousand for 1938, and an average of 10.4 for the ten years 1930 to 1939.

Deaths.—The total number of deaths registered was 1,271, of which 101 related to persons not ordinarily resident in the district. To the difference of 1,170 must be added 168 relating to Southport residents who died while on a temporary stay outside the town, which gives a net figure of 1,338 deaths, 606 being males, and 732 females. This total gives a crude death rate of 16.34 per thousand of the population, but this is reduced to 13.56 as the corrected death rate by the application of the areal comparability factor. This latter rate for 1938 was 12.83.

The above total of 1,338 includes 41 children under 1 year of age, 37 (22 boys and 15 girls) of whom were legitimate and 4 (3 boys and 1 girl) were illegitimate. The infantile mortality rate per 1,000 births comes to 52 as compared with 70 in 1938. Only on two occasions, in 1932 and 1934 when the number was 40 in each case, has there been fewer than 41 infant deaths in one year.

Maternal Mortality.—Three women died in, or as a consequence of, childbirth. Two of the deaths were attributable to puerperal sepsis. The maternal mortality rate for the year 1939 was therefore 3.66 per 1,000 live and still-births. No maternal deaths occurred in 1938.

ZYMOTIC DEATH RATE.

Diphtheria 8. Measles 2. Diarrhoea 4.
Scarlet Fever 2. Typhoid Nil. Whooping Cough 1.
Total deaths—17. Rate per 1,000—0.21.

BIRTH-RATES, DEATH-RATES, ANALYSIS OF MORTALITY, MATERNAL MORTALITY AND CASE NOTES FOR CERTAIN INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN THE YEAR 1939.

Provisional figures based on Weekly and Quarterly Returns.

	England and Wales.	126 C.Bs. and Great Towns including London.	148 Smaller Towns Resident Pop. 25,000-50,000 1931 Census.	London Adm. County.	Southport.
	Rates per 1,000 Pop.ulation.				
Live Births	15.00	14.80	15.60	12.30	9.53
Still Births	0.59	0.59	0.57	0.44	0.35
<i>Deaths :—</i>					
All Causes	12.10	12.00	11.20	11.90	16.34
Typhoid and Paratyphoid	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
Smallpox	—	—	—	—	—
Measles	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.02
Scarlet Fever	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02
Whooping Cough	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.01
Diphtheria	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.02	0.10
Influenza	0.21	0.19	0.20	0.18	0.35
<i>Notifications :—</i>					
Smallpox	0.00	—	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	1.89	1.96	1.78	1.53	2.15
Diphtheria	1.14	1.21	1.16	0.98	1.84
Enteric	0.04	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.01
Erysipelas	0.34	0.40	0.31	0.37	0.37
Pneumonia	1.02	1.21	0.89	0.99	1.15

BIRTH-RATES, etc.—continued.

	England and Wales.	126 C.Bs. and Great Towns including London.	148 Smaller Towns Resident Pop. 25,000-50,000 1931 Census.	London Adm. County.	Southport.
	Rates per 1,000 Live		Births :—		
Deaths under 1 year of age	50	53	40	48	52
Deaths from Diarrhoea and Enteritis un- der 2 years of age	4.60	6.30	3.00	8.20	5.10
Maternal Mortality :—					
Puerperal Sepsis	0.77	Not available			2.52
Others	2.16				1.26
Total	2.93				3.79
	Rates per 1,000		Total Births	(Live and Still)	
Maternal Mortality :—					
Puerperal Sepsis	0.74	Not available			2.44
Others	2.08				1.22
Total	2.82				3.66
Notifications :—					
Puerperal Fever	14.35	17.26	12.99	{ 3.31 14.22 }	11.54
Puerperal Pyrexia }					

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water.—During the year ended March 31st, 1939, the Southport and District Water Board supplied direct an estimated population of 121,612 excluding summer visitors. The average domestic consumption, excluding meter supplies and based on this population figure, was at the rate of 24.00 gallons per head per day, and the total consumption of 30.34 gallons per head per day.

The exceptionally high state of organic purity of the water was maintained.

Drainage and Sewerage.—Two cesspools were abolished in 1939, and the houses concerned drained into the public sewer.

Sanitary Inspection of the Area.—The Chief Sanitary Inspector and his staff made 30,074 visits during the year. Of these 1,281 were made as a result of complaints received from the public. The routine inspection of special premises entailed 1,460 visits.

Sanitary defects remedied:—

Houses redrained, or drains amended, etc.	221.
Building and altering W.C.'s	253.
Miscellaneous nuisances, etc., remedied	1,069.

Abatement of Nuisances:—

Cases reported	1,258.
Cases abated	1,256.
Cases not abated	2.
Work deferred for further negotiations	2.

HOUSING.

New Houses.—308 new houses were built during 1939. With the exception of 24 built by the local authority these were built by private enterprise.

Overcrowding.—During the year five cases of overcrowding were relieved. The families in each case numbered ten persons or more.

SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES.

Milk.—There were 136 dairymen (excluding purveyors of bottled milk) in the Borough on the 31st December, 1939. Fifty three of these are also producers, of which only three produce milk on licence granted under the terms of the Milk (Special Designations) Order, 1936.

One additional dealers' licence to sell pasteurised milk was issued during the year. At the end of the year the number of milk purveyors entitled to sell pasteurised milk by licence was 20.

Under war conditions the importance of milk as a "protective" food becomes enhanced, and an adequate supply at a cost which brings it within the purchasing power of those who have to subsist on a very limited income is a national necessity.

The general concensus of informed opinion has for many years been directed to the advantages of efficient pasteurisation, as this ensures a milk supply which is safe to drink.

Unfortunately this war has caught us at a time when, although the need for pasteurisation of raw milk supplies is recognised, no national scheme along these lines is in existence.

The consequence is that though milk must be regarded as one of the staple foodstuffs in our national diet in view of the demand for "protective" foods, a great part of the national supply cannot be regarded as safe and therefore fit for human consumption.

This being so, it is incumbent upon all persons who have the interests of the public health in view to stress the rule that if an efficiently pasteurised supply of milk is not available, then at least the raw milk supply should be made safe by bringing it to boiling point in the home.

In addition to the regular samplings of milk and periodical inspection of herds, the practice of subjecting milk to a sediment test was continued. The results of these tests show a high standard of cleanliness. Out of 49 samples subjected to the test only three showed an excess amount of extraneous matter. In each case the attention of the farmer was drawn to the result, and repeat tests showed marked improvement.

The number of samples of milk taken for chemical analysis was 163, and of these 139 were genuine.

Twenty-four samples were taken during investigations of six samples which proved not to be genuine. It was necessary to institute legal proceedings only in one case.

The number of samples of milk taken for bacteriological examination totalled 116. 64 of these were of milk supplied from sources inside the Borough, and 52 from outside the Borough. Three of the latter were found to be tuberculous.

VISITS OF INSPECTION IN CONNECTION WITH THE SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Public Slaughter-houses	609
Private Slaughter-houses	268
Butchers' Shops	3,105
Fish and Poultry Shops	2,417
Other Shops	4,290
Restaurants, etc.	106
Ice Cream Workshops	84
Ice Cream Stalls	347
Potted Meat and Fish Works	680
Piggeries	31
Milk Farms	244
Private premises where Pigs were killed	10
Total	12,191

INSTITUTIONAL ACCOMMODATION FOR THE AGED AND CHRONIC SICK.

The aged and chronic sick are admitted in the first instance to the Ormskirk County Hospital, and transferred to Fleetwood Road Hospital as vacancies occur.

Twenty men and 40 women patients were in the Fleetwood Road Hospital at the beginning of the year, and 34 patients were admitted during the year. Sixteen patients were discharged, and 22 died; thus there were 56 patients, 14 men and 42 women, in the hospital on the 31st December, 1939.

The bed accommodation at this hospital had to be reduced from 62 to 58 because of alterations consequent upon the erection of the new Nurses' Home. This extension has been completed, and was put into use early in 1940.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

Ante-Natal Clinics.—The clinics held at the Christiana Hartley Maternity Hospital and No. 44, Hoghton Street were carried on throughout the year. The numbers of mothers and attendances were:—Maternity Hospital, 491 and 2,038 attendances, and 353 cases and 1,070 attendances at the Central Ante-Natal Clinic at 44, Hoghton Street. The number of mothers attending the Maternity Dental Clinic was 147, and they made 814 attendances.

Post-Natal Clinic.—The Post-Natal Clinic held at 44, Hoghton Street was discontinued at the end of August as a result of the building being taken over for A.R.P. purposes. Up to that time a total of 124 individual cases, involving 204 attendances, had been seen at the clinic. The clinic was re-opened in April, 1940.

Domiciliary Midwifery.—The four municipal midwives attended 209 cases as compared with 238 in the year 1938. From the date of the commencement of the service, i.e., 1st October, 1937, the total cases attended is therefore 498. Approximately 30 cases had to be handed over to independent midwives because of unusual sickness amongst the municipal midwives during the year 1939. 31 midwives notified their intention to practice. Four of these are municipal midwives, 9 are engaged in hospital work;

and the remainder are in independent practice in the town. The independent midwives attended 118 cases. The Supervisor of Midwives paid 41 visits of inspection.

Christiana Hartley Maternity Hospital.—Additional beds were set up at the Maternity Hospital on the outbreak of war, and during the year 466 mothers were admitted; this is the highest number in any one year in the history of the hospital. Thirty-nine of the mothers were evacuees, leaving 427 as the number to be compared with 369, 347 and 312 for the years 1938, 1937 and 1936.

The new nurses' home, presented by Miss Hartley, was completed during the year, and formally opened early in 1940.

Notifications of Births and Health Visitors.—The number of births notified was 971, 152 by doctors, and 819 by midwives. Thirty-eight of the notifications were in respect of still-births, and 933 were live births.

The visits to homes paid by the Health Visitors for the past three years are as follows:—

	1937.	1938.	1939.
To expectant mothers:			
First visits	241	135	106
Total visits	1,351	694	406
To children under one year:			
First visits	870	712	626
Total visits	6,496	6,928	7,023
To children between 1 and 5:			
Total visits	6,972	8,144	8,496
To boarded out children	263	214	112
To nurse children	293	388	149

Child Welfare Centres.—The following are the attendances at the Welfare Centres during the year:—

TOTAL NUMBER OF ATTENDANCES AT THE SOUTHPORT WELFARE CENTRES FOR THE YEAR 1939.

NAME OF CENTRE	ATTENDANCES							
	Nursing Mothers		Expectant Mothers		Infants		Children over 1 and under 5	
	1st Visits	Re-Visits	1st Visits	Re-Visits	1st Visits	Re-Visits	1st Visits	Re-Visits
Hampton Road	180	4109	18	100	159	2140	32	2119
High Park	115	3200	7	44	108	2099	12	1561
Liverpool Road	128	4078	15	19	123	2198	18	2475
Crossens	80	2514	—	—	89	1516	5	1383
Hoghton Street	76	2206	19	27	72	1376	12	1201
Totals	579	16107	59	190	551	9329	79	8739
„ 1938.....	537	16906	71	254	509	9633	—	10060
„ 1937.....	665	15209	58	171	675	9263	—	8533

St. Katherine's Home.—The Matron of the home for unmarried mothers has kindly submitted statistics of the Home for 1939. There were 15 girls in the Home on the 1st January, 1939, and 55 new cases were admitted during the year. At the end of the year there were 10 girls in the Home. Forty-three babies were born during the year.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

Diphtheria.—151 cases were notified and all were admitted to the Isolation Hospital for treatment. In the main the type of infection was severe and eight deaths were recorded as due to this disease. There was a moderate increase in the incidence during the last three months of the year but this was not excessive considering the increased child population consequent upon the evacuation from Bootle and Liverpool.

Prevention.—During the year 1,167 children were protected by immunisation. The Health Committee's scheme for the free immunisation of children up to the age of fourteen years was commenced on May 1st, 1938, and since that date the total number of infants and children immunised up to the end of 1939 was 1,793.

Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fever.—One case of Enteric (Typhoid) Fever was notified and admitted to the Isolation Hospital for treatment. The patient was a man of 32 years. His home address was some distance from Southport and no local source could be traced.

Dysentery.—Nineteen cases of dysentery due to the Sonn  type of organism were notified. All were admitted for isolation and treatment. Twelve of the nineteen were members of two families, numbering seven and five respectively.

Scarlet Fever.—176 cases were notified and of these 154 were admitted to the Isolation Hospital. The disease was invariably mild in type and the numbers show a slight reduction as compared with the previous year. Two deaths from this disease were recorded.

Erysipelas.—Thirty cases were notified as compared with 40 in the previous year. Six were admitted for treatment.

Measles.—The incidence was very low. 155 cases were notified. Two cases were admitted to the Isolation Hospital on account of the severity of the attack and the presence of complications. Two deaths were recorded as due to this disease.

Whooping Cough.—186 cases were notified, four of which were admitted for treatment. In some instances the attack was very acute and one death occurred, in the case of an infant aged 15 months.

Cerebro-Spinal Fever.—Two cases were notified during the last quarter. Both were soldiers and there was a common source of infection. They were admitted to the Isolation Hospital for treatment. Both recovered but required a lengthy convalescence.

Encephalitis Lethargica.—Two notifications were received during the year.

Acute Poliomyelitis.—Two notifications were received

German Measles.—During the latter half of the year the incidence of this complaint showed a tendency to rise and a total of 131 cases were notified during 1939, as compared with 20 in 1938.

VACCINATION.

The number of certificates of successful vaccination received during the year was 202, as compared with 194 for 1938, 177 for 1937 and 160 for 1936. The statutory declarations of conscientious objection to vaccination totalled 497, as against 515, 566 and 532 in the previous three years.

NEW HALL HOSPITAL.

There were 43 patients in the Fever Side at New Hall Hospital on the 1st January, 1939; 549 patients were admitted during the year and there were 42 in on the 31st December. The admissions included 102 evacuees, and in November the accommodation threatened to become insufficient, and it was decided to open an annexe at the Wigan School on the Esplanade, where 36 additional beds were set up; 23 patients were transferred from New Hall to the annexe, and in addition there were five direct admissions, two of which were evacuees. Of the 28 patients, 18 were discharged before the end of the year.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The number of new cases of tuberculosis which came to the notice of the department during the year was 71. Of these 37 were suffering from pulmonary disease. Of the total of 71 new cases, 83 per cent. were examined at the Dispensary. The number of cases on the Dispensary Register at the end of the year was 241, and of this number 119 were found to have sputum containing tubercle bacilli.

On the 1st January, 1939, there were 32 patients in New Hall Sanatorium, and during the year 43 new cases were admitted. In the course of the year 42 patients were discharged and 12 died, leaving 21 in the Sanatorium at the end of the year.

The accommodation in the Sanatorium is 36 beds, 14 of which are in wooden shelters. The proposal for replacing the shelter accommodation with a new pavilion could not be proceeded with because of the outbreak of war, and approaches to the Ministry of Health for permission to proceed with the work have been unavailing.

The year 1939 is noteworthy for the formation of the Southport Voluntary Tuberculosis Care Committee, under the Chairmanship of Councillor F. W. Reddaway. There was a definite need for this Committee, the purpose of which is to help in the fight against tuberculosis in those ways which are not available to the local authority.

VENEREAL DISEASES.

At the end of 1939, 242 persons were under treatment. The new cases received at the department during the year are classified as follows:—

	M.	F.	Total.
Syphilis	10	11	21
Gonorrhoea	26	13	39
Non-V.D.	32	15	47
Transferred from other areas	8	3	11
Undiagnosed at the end of the year.....			13
			<hr/> 131 <hr/>

The total number of attendances in the out-patient department was 6,372. Sixty-six patients were admitted for in-patient treatment.

The number of attendances at the clinic is lower than in previous years owing to the fact that fewer new cases presented themselves for treatment, and for the reason noted in last year's report that the more recent method of treatment of gonorrhoea is more rapid in its effect.

There were eight maternity cases admitted:—

Syphilis	2
Gonorrhoea	4
Non-V.D. (observation cases)	2
	<hr/> 8 <hr/>

All these received ante-natal treatment with the result that with one exception full term healthy infants were born in each case. In the case of the exception the infant was still-born.

The expected rise in the incidence of venereal disease has not been apparent so far, but owing to the conditions prevailing in war time it is anticipated that this rise will be experienced sooner or later.

BLIND WELFARE.

At the beginning of 1939 there were 142 blind persons on the Register. During the year 21 new names were added and 25 names taken off, so that in December the number on the Register was 138. Of the 25 names taken off, 16 were deaths, seven left the town, and the remaining two were instances of persons who on medical re-examination were found not to come within the definition of "blind person". The total on the Register at the end of the year may be classified as follows:—(a) 71 males and 67 females; (b) two under 16 years of age; three between 16 and 21; 11 in the group 22 to 49 years; 64 with group 50 to 69; and 58 were 70 years or more.

The number of visits paid by the Home Teacher and her assistant to blind persons in their homes was 2,880, and 82 classes for instruction were held. Ten social gatherings were arranged during the winter months.

At the end of the year, 83 of the blind persons on the Register were receiving weekly grants, and during the year the total grant amounted to £2,542 6s. 0d. Ten blind persons are resident in approved Institutions for the blind.

The Blind Welfare Centre, where handicraft classes are held and where work of the blind welfare is generally administered, was situated up to the 1st September at No. 44, Hoghton Street, but the need for this building for war purposes made it necessary to find alternative accommodation. This was provided at the St. John Hall in Scarisbrick Street, and after a while the normal programme of teaching of crafts, Braille reading and writing, Moon reading and typewriting was in full swing. In June, 1940, the Centre was transferred to more permanent quarters at No. 27, Hoghton Street.

Miss F. Skidmore, Home Teacher, resigned her appointment in September, 1939, on the occasion of her marriage, and Miss M. Tweedy succeeded her. Miss Tweedy came at a very difficult time when the exigencies of war had materially upset the blind welfare arrangements and provided her with conditions not at all easy for carrying on the work.

As in former years, many willing helpers were available. Thanks are due to the Rotary Club for arranging the annual outing, to the Toc H, to the late Mr. Cross of the Infirmary, to the Transport Committee for the provision of free bus passes, and to the Artists who have entertained the blind persons at the socials. Finally, to Miss Mace who continues to devote a great deal of her time voluntarily to the welfare of the blind people of Southport.

SCHOOL MEDICAL OFFICER'S REPORT TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION FOR THE YEAR 1939.

The work of the School Medical Service was carried out on the usual lines until it was interrupted on the eve of the outbreak of war by the attention required by the large number of children sent under the evacuation scheme from Bootle and certain districts of Liverpool. Many children also came to the town from other areas by private arrangement, and had to be included in the work of the service.

Nearly 8,000 elementary school children were received from Bootle, mainly on the first day of evacuation. The staff of the School Medical Officer, together with several General Practitioners and numbers of voluntary workers, trained nurses and others, were on duty at the four stations at which the trains arrived. As far as possible, from rapid observation or from information given by teachers, children who seemed ill or appeared to be unsuitable for billeting were taken from their school parties and examined by a doctor at the station. It soon became clear that uncleanness or milder skin disorders could not be taken to classify the child as unsuitable for billeting as the numbers so affected were too great to accommodate in institutions, even although large provision had been made. If the child examined **was** suitable for billeting, then transport was available to make sure that he caught up with his school party and, for billeting purposes, did not get separated from his friends. Unsuitable cases were admitted to all accommodation available, viz., New Hall Hospital, Convalescent Hospital, North of England Children's Sanatorium, and a few to West Hill Convalescent Hospital.

As soon as evacuation was, for the time being, completed, a Medical Officer and several Health Visitors were transferred from Bootle to assist in the clinic work and visiting required by the new circumstances. Several auxiliary Health Visitors were also employed for a time, as not only the school service, but also the Maternity and Child Welfare Department had received grave increases in their responsibilities.

Many of the householders who had billetees sent to them were unaccustomed to children, and equally unused to dealing with the uncleanness and minor ailments from which many of them suffered. There was, therefore, during the first week, an endless train of seekers for advice and treatment at the Health Centre, which, for the first few days was never closed. The Health visitors worked unceasingly, cleansing heads, washing children to make them more attractive to their hosts, giving advice and treatment and pouring oil on troubled waters generally in a way which left the community at large greatly in their debt. At the same time, the hosts and hostesses in most cases did more than could have been expected of them in cleansing, and often in clothing, the children of their less fortunate neighbours.

Additional clinics had, of course, to be held. Two centres opened at the outskirts of the town for advice and treatment of minor ailments proved very useful. Minor ailment clinics at the main centre were also duplicated, and additional eye and ear clinics were held. The attendances were as follows:—

ATTENDANCES AT CLINICS TO DECEMBER 31st, 1939.

Doctors' Clinics.	Southport.	Bootle. (Sept. to Dec. only)
Minor Ailment and Skin	5,029	2,128
Nose and Throat	152	4
Ophthalmic	421	66
Artificial Sunlight	28	—
Aural	557	136

Nurses' Clinics.		
Daily Treatment	8,385	4,963
Nasal	1,107	84
Aural	349	135
Artificial Sunlight	565	8

The conditions treated at the Minor Ailment Clinic were of the usual types which affect all children, with the exception, noted in other parts of the country, that a large number of evacuated children were brought for advice about enuresis. These apparently fell mainly into two classes, viz., children who had been badly trained at home, and secondly, the nervous type in whom the trouble began, or at least began again, following the upset of evacuation and the strangeness of new surroundings. In the first class there was no short-cut to improvement, and many of these children returned home. In the second group, advice, sympathy and a course of ephedrine had very good results in many cases.

In the early weeks following evacuation, the skin clinics were very large and the difficulty of persuading householders to keep children suffering from skin complaints, great. A large private house was therefore opened as a skin hospital, and up to December 31st, 1939, 128 children were admitted and treated with very good results.

It was clear, after a short time, that the cleansing which could be carried out at the clinic was hampered by lack of space. Other arrangements were therefore made as soon as possible. From September 5th, for two weeks, premises which were in the main used as a hostel for mothers and young children were brought into use for cleansing. There, meals were provided, and the child could be kept for the day, or overnight, if necessary, so that the work could be done thoroughly, and the clothes stoved. In this time 45 children were cleansed. Later these premises were again used, and another 33 cases were dealt with. In the meantime still more room was required for cleansing, and a house was taken for the purpose, staffed by a Bootle Health Visitor and a cook, assisted by voluntary workers—notably by members of the British Red Cross—who, throughout the time that the house was open, gave very devoted service to an uninspiring task. The house was open from September 18th to December 5th, and during the period 496 children were cleansed. Constant nursing supervision of those likely to offend has since been carried out, and by the end of 1939 the position with regard to cleanliness in the schools had certainly improved.

The disorganisation of the School Health Services consequent on evacuation prevented Routine Medical Inspection being carried out in two elementary schools and all higher schools in 1939. These inspections are normally carried out in the last quarter of the year.

By the beginning of October, as the main work of the Services had been got into running order and the most urgent problems tackled, it was felt that the next essential was a general survey of all children then in the Southport schools. Accordingly, with a certain amount of help from practitioners used to the work, a scheme was drawn up which gave an average of 12 sessions per week to the inspection and, by the end of 1939, 8,074 children had been individually examined by a doctor, and the main difficulties dealt with. So far as possible the local and evacuated schools attached to the same school building were examined concurrently so that, at the end of an inspection and following up, that unit could be considered, for the time being at least, as cleanly and free from contagious diseases. The teachers welcomed the survey in spite of the unavoidable upset it caused to time-tables which were already difficult enough. The survey was completed by February, 1940. Special attention was paid to nutrition and it was felt that no undernourished child was missed. The number shown in the table below as recommended for free meals and/or milk does not represent the whole effort made towards improving the condition of those found to be in a nutritional category lower than "B", because many of those had already started extra feeding before they were seen at the survey. Actually, in November, 1939, 279 Southport children were recommended for free meals and milk and 192 for milk only. In December, 1939, 388 Southport children and 523 Bootle children were receiving free milk only at school, while all Southport children receiving free meals were also being given milk.

The figures from the survey up to the end of 1939 follow.

**SUMMARY OF MEDICAL SURVEY IN SOUTHPORT AND BOOTLE SCHOOLS DURING
THE MONTHS OF OCTOBER TO DECEMBER, 1939.**

DEFECTS FOUND, ETC.	SOUTHPORT SCHOOLS		BOOTLE SCHOOLS	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
No. Seen at Inspection	4875	—	3199	—
Head. Nits	434	8.90%	753	23.48%
Nits + +	54	1.11%	126	3.94%
Vermin	17	.35%	22	.69%
Body. Vermin	nil	nil	3	.09%
Dirty	21 and 6 F.B.	.43% and .12% F.B.	1 and 1 F.B.	.03% and .03% F.B.
Clothing. Dirty	21	.43%	11	.23%
Poor	27	.55%	13	.27%
Poor Footwear	45	.92%	35	1.09%
Nutrition. A.....	370	7.60%	92	2.88%
B.....	4005	82.20%	2674	83.59%
C.....	492	10.09%	428	13.38%
D.....	8	.17%	5	.16%

SUMMARY OF MEDICAL SURVEY, etc.—continued.

DEFECTS FOUND, ETC.	SOUTHPORT SCHOOLS		BOOTLE SCHOOLS	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Recommended for Meals	29	·59%	nil	nil
" " Milk	236	4·48%	315	9·85%
Requiring Vision Treatment	100	2·05%	131	4·09%
Requiring Ear Treatment	25	·51%	22	·69%
Skin. Scabies	2	·04%	11	·23%
Ringworm	1	·02%	nil	nil
Impetigo	9	·18%	3	·09%
Other	75	1·53%	64	2·00%
Nose and Throat	78	1·60%	64	2·00%
Requiring Dental Treatment	380	7·79%	361	11·28%
Other Defects	159	4·64%	130	4·06%
No. Excluded	79	1·62%	142	4·44%
No. of Special Visits to Homes	30	·62%	10	·31%

HEALTH OF CHILDREN FOLLOWING EVACUATION.

As the **influx** of school population exceeded the normal number of elementary school children, conditions at school were bound to be very crowded, and considerable apprehension was felt about the possible effect on health. All halls at all suitable for extra school sessions were taken over by the Education Committee and a "two shift system" was introduced. On the "on" or main shift the pupils occupied the normal school building, and on the "off" shift usually a nearby church hall. Many of these "off" shift buildings were quite inadequate and could not have been tolerated for long, even as a war-time measure. They were hopelessly overcrowded, and the sanitary accommodation was often most unsuitable. The situation was saved, however, by two factors, viz., the fact that there was little infectious disease in the district when war started, and that the exceptionally fine Autumn allowed the carrying out of the principle that as much of the "off" shift as possible was to be spent in the open air. Daily walks were the routine, and it is safe to say that many of the children and staff alike walked more in the first few months following evacuation than they had ever done before. The improvement in health brought about by this out-of-doors exercise was noticeable in many cases. Fortunately, in one respect, by the time the colds and influenza of early 1940 developed, many children had returned to their homes, and the overcrowding, which would then have been serious, was relieved.

Several evacuated teachers took great interest in the weights of their pupils following their change of surroundings. Some children in the poorer schools did put on very considerable amounts of weight in a short time.

**INCIDENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE IN SCHOOL CHILDREN,
SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER, 1939.**

	SEPTEMBER		OCTOBER		NOVEMBER		DECEMBER	
	S'thport	Bootle	S'port	Bootle	S'thport	Bootle	S'thport	Bootle
Diphtheria	5	12	10 (1)	12	8	6	3	1
Measles	8	1	3	—	1	—	—	—
Scarlet Fever	8	10	12 (4)	5	8 (1)	1	4	2
Chickenpox	3	5	9	8	37	5	48 (2)	—
Whooping Cough	5	2	4	—	2	—	—	—

NOTE.—Figures in parenthesis relate to " Other Evacuees."



